



Houston Passport Agency
Dress Code and Personal Hygiene Policy
February 8, 2019

This agreement between Houston Passport Agency (PPT/HN) Management and PPT/HN Union representatives replaces the current dress code agreement dated April 19, 2011, and was negotiated pursuant to Article 6, Section 10 and Article 12, Section 16(f)(i) of the Master Agreement Between Passport Services, U.S. Department of State and the National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE) Local 1998, IAMAW, AFL-CIO dated December 2018. The parties hereby agree as follows:

General Applicability

The purpose of this locally determined agreement is to develop a clearer, more detailed description of acceptable dress code standards at the Houston Passport Agency. Employees should use this as a guide to meet local standards and to convey a sense of service and professionalism.

The list of inclusions and exclusions in this document is not exhaustive. Although no dress code can cover all contingencies, employees are expected to exert good judgment in their choice of clothing.

The Master Agreement between Passport Services and the NFFE Local 1998 recognizes the need for good grooming and proper attire at passport agencies. Bargaining unit employees will observe reasonable dress, appearance and grooming standards. All attire standards will be conducive to a working environment that is safe, productive and non-disruptive.

Employees participating in on-site or off-site outreach activities must wear modified business professional attire on such occasions, including if the activity occurs on the Agency's designated casual day. Management will re-schedule cancelled casual days to another day that week or the following week.

This locally negotiated dress code will apply to all bargaining unit employees (BUEs) at PPT/HN.

Modified Business Professional Attire

Modified Business Professional attire is the standard dress attire Monday through Thursday. Modified Business Professional attire is required when dealing with the public during work related functions that are offsite, (e.g., AF site visits, Customer Service Acceptance Agents Training, and Naturalization Ceremonies), which may include days designated as "Casual Days" at the Agency. An employee being assigned to any of these work-related functions will be given advanced notice of at least one working day prior to the event.

Modified Business Professional Attire (continued)

- Dress slacks or dress khakis/chinos/twill/corduroy
- Dress Capri pants or dress skirts
- Dress shoes (see Dress Code Shoe Supplement)
- Collared dress shirt*
- Dress Blouses
- Dresses
- Sweaters (Pullover, cardigan)
- Spaghetti-strap dresses, if worn with a jacket
- Dress jumpsuit
- Shawls and wraps
- Religious attire (sincerely held beliefs)
- (Optional) Business suits and sports coats, neckties
- Polo shirts tucked in
- Loose stirrup pants
- Dress shirts, pullovers, polo shirts tucked in, sweaters, fleece jackets, bearing logos/ insignias, but not limited to, the Department of State, Passport Services, the regional office, the AFL-CIO, the IAMAW, NFFE, and/or Local 1998.
- Jackets, cardigans, sweaters, etc. (with or without hoods**), so long as they are professional in nature.
- Jackets and coats that are considered outerwear while sitting at their assigned workstation, excluding the public counter.
- Athletic attire (with or without hoods) such as hoodies and sweatshirts are not allowed except where provided in this agreement.

*Shirts that are tailored to be tucked in must be tucked into slacks/trousers.

**The wearing of a hood on the head is considered year round inappropriate attire.

Dresses/Skirts may be worn above the knee but no shorter than 3.25 inches above the top of the knee, roughly the size of an employee ID card or driver license.

Modified Business Casual Attire

Per Article 6, Section 9 of the Master Agreement, the Agency has designated at least one day of the work week to be a “*Casual day*”. The normal casual day for the Agency is designated as Friday. If a holiday falls on Friday, then Thursday will be the designated “*Casual day*” that week.

BUEs are permitted to wear the following attire on “*Casual days*”:

- All Modified Business Professional attire
- Jeans and palazzos
- Rugby shirts and button-down shirts worn untucked
- T-shirts
- Polo shirt and/or clothing bearing the logos or insignias of the Department of State, Passport Services, Regional offices, the AFL-CIO, the IAMAW, NFFE, and/or Local 1998
- Athletic shoes and sandals (see Dress Code Shoe Supplement)
- When designated as “*Team Spirit Days*” by management, BUEs may wear sports attire (with or without hoods**) displaying the team logo or insignia such as jackets, jerseys, hoodies, sweatshirts, t-shirts, polo style shirts, etc. Athletic suits, warm-ups and sweat pants, continue to be inappropriate attire year-round.

Modified Business Casual Attire (continued)

During holidays and special events that occur on “Casual Days,” cultural headgear and/or religious headgear are permissible.

Employees must use good judgment at all times with regard to appropriate attire. However, certain attire is inappropriate regardless of any designations or exceptions noted in this agreement. Following is a non-exhaustive list of inappropriate/unacceptable attire.

Inappropriate/Unacceptable Attire

- Athletic clothing (e.g., warm-ups, sweatshirts/sweatpants)
- Beach wear
- Bermuda shorts
- Bib overalls
- Cutoffs and shorts
- Pajamas or pajama-style clothing
- Flip-flops/shower shoes/bedroom slippers
- Hats/Headgear
- Mini-skirts and skorts
- Leggings or Jeggings
- Spaghetti-strap dresses worn without a jacket
- Skirts shorter than 3.25 inches from the knees
- Spandex or other form-fitting apparel such as people wear for biking.
- Tank tops/crop tops/tube tops/halter tops
- Any item that has the mid-to lower back or the abdomen exposed
- Undergarments worn as outer garments, including T-Shirts that are designed as undergarments
- Clothing that is transparent/see-through in nature
- Wrinkled, torn, cut-out or frayed clothing
- Clothing that is unclean
- Clothing that have potentially offensive words, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, and slogans

Reasonable Accommodations/Temporary Arrangements

Per Article 6 Section 15 of the Master Agreement, “any bargaining unit employee may request special consideration due to personal hardship. Management will consider all hardship requests and where possible, take steps to provide assistance.” Employees may submit their request to their supervisor in advance or at the earliest opportunity.

Temporary Medical Condition

If an employee requests a temporary deviation from the agreed upon local dress code lasting for three days or less, management may arrange a temporary work place arrangement.

An employee who has a temporary medical condition that lasts longer than three days, and is supported by a medical document with an end date, and requests a deviation from the agreed upon local dress code, on a case-by-case basis, and after management approval, may have a temporary workplace arrangement and be permitted to wear attire that may fall outside of specifications in this policy.

Reasonable Accommodations/Temporary Arrangements (continued)

Temporary is defined as less than 90 calendar days from the original date of request/approval or as designated by a medical document with an end date.

In any case, for each instance of a local "temporary" arrangement, management may require a status update after each 90-day period.

Permanent Medical Condition

If the documented medical condition has no end date, the employee must request and receive approval from the Bureau of Human Resources Office of Accessibility and Accommodations Disability/Reasonable Accommodations Division (HR/OAA/DRAD), following the guidelines established in 3 FAH-1 H-3671. If a reasonable accommodation is approved by the Bureau of Human Resources Office of (HR/OAA/DRAD), employees will still be required to observe this dress code that is required of other employees in the same job excluding the accommodation.

For example, an employee will still be required to wear appropriate modified business professional attire (on non-casual days) because the nature of the job could bring them into contact with customers and the public. If the approved reasonable accommodation for footwear requires athletic shoes, then only dark or neutral colors that are not neon/florescent in color are permitted. Previously approved reasonable accommodations must also comply with this requirement.

In the case of a condition where an accommodation from DRAD is required, a local "temporary" arrangement will be granted by Management. This "temporary" arrangement will be reviewed and, if appropriate, renewed every 90 days until DRAD renders a decision. If DRAD does not approve an accommodation -- whether it denies or closes the request -- then local Management will render a decision based on provisions of this policy.

Personal Hygiene and Grooming Standard

A neat, clean, business-like and professional appearance is required for all employees. Every employee is expected to practice daily hygiene and good grooming habits. Supervisors are expected to discuss questions concerning grooming and good hygiene with employees in a setting and tone that respects the employee's privacy and dignity.

Executive Dress Guide

If an executive guest (e.g. Deputy Assistant Secretary, Regional Director, Senator, Mayor) visits during the Agency's designated casual day, employees will be expected to follow the Modified Business Professional requirements of this agreement. In lieu of the cancelled casual day, Management will designate an alternative casual day during that week or the following week.

Exceptions for Operational Needs

Upon approval by the Director or an Assistant Director, employees (e.g. administrative / operations officer) who will be engaged with moving equipment or other, similar physical activity may wear modified business casual attire.

Additional Casual Days

Modified Business Casual attire will be permitted during the calendar week of Christmas.

At its discretion, Management may declare additional casual days or permit alternate clothing (e.g. sports jersey). Employees will be notified by Management of attire exceptions/additional casual days. Otherwise, employees must dress in Modified Business Professional attire as described in the sections above.

Violations

Supervisors and managers will address any situation in which inappropriate attire is worn or the grooming and hygiene standards are unmet. If an employee wears questionable attire or does not meet grooming and hygiene standards as described in this agreement, the supervisor/manager will hold a private discussion with the employee.

If an employee fails to follow this negotiated agreement, the employee may be counseled by the employee's first line supervisor and/or agency management. Appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with the Master Agreement could be taken for future occurrences in which an employee does not meet the standards in this agreement.

Distribution

The union will notify and provide a copy of this policy to the BUEs by email. Management will also post and maintain an electronic copy of this policy on the local SharePoint.

Review and Revision

This agreement will be in effect for a minimum of one year from the date of execution. During the term of the agreement, the agreement may be reopened by mutual agreement of the parties. After one year, either party may reopen this agreement at any time by notifying the other party in writing.

This local agreement is subject to all provisions in the Master Agreement and is subject to change to comply with any future agreements between Passport Services and the National Federation of Federal Employees, or directives by Passport Services in accordance with the substantive bargaining provisions of Article 12 of the Master Agreement.

Implementation and Effective Date

Upon signing below by Union and Management, this agreement shall be implemented on February 8, 2019. There will be a 30-day grace period from the date of the signing of this agreement prior to full implementation. However, employees should strive to begin meeting the acceptable "Office Attire" requirement immediately.

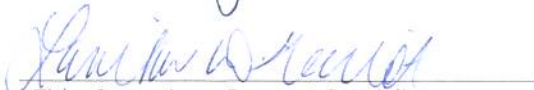
For Management:



Title: Assistant Director



Title: Adjudication Manager



Title: Supervisory Passport Specialist

For the Union:



Title: Senior NFFE Steward



Title: NFFE Steward



Title: NFFE Steward